



TOWN OF STRATFORD

CONSERVATION COMMISSION

January 11, 2022

MEETING MINUTES

The Conservation Commission conducted a regularly scheduled meeting on Tuesday January 11, 2022 via GoToMeeting, pursuant to notice duly posted.

MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:

- Cassandra Bryant
- Angela Capinera – Vice-Chairman
- Gregg Dancho – Chairman
- Laura Dancho – 10th District Town Council
- Joe Koripsky
- Karen Rodia

TOWN REPRESENTATIVES IN ATTENDANCE:

- Kelly Kerrigan – Environmental Conservation Superintendent

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE

- Ryan Romeo

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Dancho called the meeting to order at 6:03pm.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Dancho accepted a motion by Ms. Rodia to approve the minutes of the regular 12/14/2021 meeting. Ms. Bryant seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

III. LORAX PRESENTATION

Ryan Romeo introduced himself, and presented his slideshow, explaining the need for planting trees and pollinator pathways. Upon completion, members thanked Mr. Romeo. Mr. Dancho noted the Town of Stratford has pollinator pathways. Ms. Bryan questioned how to get students interested in choosing a career as an arborist. Mr. Romeo suggested going into the schools and speaking directly to the students. Ms. Dancho questioned if

there is an environmental curriculum in school; per Mr. Romeo there is. Mr. Dancho explained he is the CT Beardsley Zoo Director, and suggested Mr. Romeo visit the zoo and volunteer there in the future. Mr. Dancho also requested Mr. Romeo's Lorax presentation be downloaded on the Town website and/or social media sites.

IV. REPORT OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION SUPERINTENDENT

- A. Tree City USA – Ms. Kerrigan stated the draft application is due 1/13/2022 and will be sent to Mayor Hoydick for her signature. She explained the Town was also awarded a \$37,000 grant from the Urban Forestry Council to plant 100 trees in two areas of Town: the westerly and southern portions of Town, which have been identified as lacking significant tree canopy. The Town Council accepted the grant at their 1/10/2022 meeting. Ms. Kerrigan is working on the contract for this project, and added there will be two community meetings regarding the tree plantings. She noted most if not all the trees will be planted in the Town's Right-of-Ways. Mr. Dancho explained past offers to residents to purchase trees for their properties at a discount. Ms. Rodia noted the Stratford Ladies are discussing online the tree removals at Longbrook Park. She suggested advertising the upcoming tree plantings; Ms. Bryant concurred. Mr. Dancho stated the Tree City USA and grant for tree plantings is good information to tell the public. Per Ms. Kerrigan, thirty street trees were planted in Fall 2021 and are being watered by the homeowners on whose properties the trees are located. Ms. Bryant questioned if tree plantings will be an annual event for Arbor Day. Per Ms. Kerrigan, that is dependent on funding. This will be on next month's agenda. Ms. Bryant reminded members the River Cleanup will be held on April 30 (the day after Arbor Day).
- B. Open Space Grant Update – For the 2017 grant, Ms. Kerrigan explained DEEP agreed to allow the Town of Stratford to move forward acquiring some of the parcels. She continues to work on the Frash Pond acquisition.
- C. Waterfront Access Points – Ms. Kerrigan has been advised by Mayor Hoydick that the guide will need approval of the Harborfront Water Management Commission and the Economic Development Commission.
- D. Brownfields/Raymark Update – Ms. Kerrigan is closing out the Center School grant. She noted the Raymark cleanup is ongoing, adding the Economic Development office has been handling the sale of the former Contract Platting site.
- E. Inland Wetlands Commission applications – Ms. Kerrigan stated the Peters Lane applicant has filed an appeal. The Teakwood Estates application was incomplete and therefore not accepted. Ms. Dancho asked if it is possible to acquire the property as open space. Ms. Kerrigan will follow-up with the property owner.
- F. Bruce Brook Watershed-Based Plan – Ms. Kerrigan is working with CT DEEP on a contract for this, which should be finished by March, before any work is done as it would not be reimbursable.
- G. Audubon Saltmarsh Stewards – Ms. Kerrigan requested members suggest any Bunnell HS and/or Stratford HS students who may be interested. She explained the Audubon will take the lead on this, and the Town Human Resources Dept. will process their employment applications and payments. Ms. Rodia suggested sending the information to BOE Superintendent Uyi Osunde, who can then forward the information to science teachers. Ms. Kerrigan will follow up on the matter.

V. OLD BUSINESS

- Kitesurfing at Long Beach – Per Mr. Dancho, this is still under review. Ms. Kerrigan noted she spoke with Recreation Superintendent Amy Knorr regarding the sign there. They will work together to educate the seasonal staff working at Long Beach this year. Mr. Dancho noted Mayor Hoydick has been good about getting more police presence at Long Beach. Ms. Kerrigan has also been monitoring the snowy owl situation at Long Beach, adding Mayor Hoydick ordered more police patrol. Ms. Rodia suggested Ms. Dancho approach the Town Council regarding charging nonresidents year-round to enter the Town beaches.
- Coastal rodents – Ms. Kerrigan is awaiting information on rodent birth control. Per Mr. Dancho, this is not good to do in Winter, as they are a source of food for Winter fowl. Per Ms. Rodia, poisoned rats should be cremated. Mr. Dancho stated there is also an issue with fleas and ticks the rodents are carrying.
- Native Planting List – Ms. Kerrigan stated she and Ms. Bryant are working on this to send to the IWWC for future applicants. Mr. Dancho requested the list be done by February.

VI. NEW BUSINESS

- Mr. Dancho suggested naming a Town area or building after retired member Bill McCann. Ms. Dancho will determine the process for doing so with Chief of Staff Mike Downes.
- Per Mr. Dancho, Arbor Day and River Cleanup will be on next month's agenda.
- Ms. Kerrigan explained the Fruit Forest subcommittee met to discuss the possibility of such at Pirhala Farm. Ms. Bryant suggested acquiring a grant for a buffer zone at this location. Per Ms. Rodia, residents have requested that personal items be removed from that location in the off-season. Ms. Dancho will discuss the matter with Director of Public Works Raynae Serra, as well as the need for signage. Ms. Kerrigan will discuss Fall cleanup there with Jason Garnet, who maintains the farm. Per Mr. Dancho, this will also be on future agendas.
- Ms. Dancho questioned the status of a pollinator pathway by Ms. Bryant's house. Ms. Bryant will measure it and plan it out. Rayzor's Edge will adopt the spot, adding it can be used as a model for potential future sites.

VII. NEXT REGULAR MEETING – Tuesday February 8, 2022 at 6:00pm

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Dancho accepted a motion by Ms. Rodia, seconded by Ms. Capinera, to adjourn at 7:08pm. The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Aileen Marsh

Recording Secretary